

July 27, 2018

Public Information Office
NH DHHS
603-271-9290
sor@dhhs.nh.gov

RE: Public Input on use of SOR Grant Funding

Rochester has a demonstrated need for additional support of prevention initiatives in response to the prevalence of opioid use disorder in our community. Our projects and programs directly impact the SOR grant's stated goal of reducing opioid-related deaths by reducing environmental risk factors and enhancing individual and family-wide protective factors with regards to substance misuse.

Bridging the Gaps, a SAHMSA Drug Free Communities grantee since 2008, is at the forefront of Rochester's community-wide prevention initiatives, with pro-social youth programs and practices being our number-one priority. Such programs have included youth to youth prevention groups at the Rochester middle school and high school, hosting community-wide discussions on prevention that drew hundreds of attendees, and co-hosting monthly Teen Night events that provide important pro-social recreational space for adolescents. In-progress and future initiatives will include support groups for vulnerable families, such as grandparents who are the primary caretakers for grandchildren, and the creation of a teen recreation center with scheduled programming, an important resource that the City of Rochester currently lacks and which has been successfully implemented in the neighboring City of Dover. We are in year ten of our federal grant and are currently working to sustain our essential prevention programs for our community.

With a population of over 30,000, the City of Rochester is one of the largest cities within the state and is the second hardest hit community in New Hampshire's continuing opioid crisis, experiencing 254 overdoses with 22 fatalities in 2017, almost double the 128 overdoses (with 18 fatalities) seen in 2016. Rochester Police Department's crime analysis data shows an average of 413 Possession of Drug charges per year between 2015 and 2017. Risk factors for Rochester youth include being in a population in which 13.5% of families are at or below the poverty level, compared to the state average of 8.7%. Rochester's 2017 high school Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (YRBS) data indicates that 11.9% of students surveyed have at least one family member in jail, and the number of DCYF-reported Assessments of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Substance Misuse in Rochester rose from 863 (45.3%) in 2013 to 983 (52.8%) in 2016, according to the 2018 Report on Parental Substance Use in NH published by the University of New Hampshire's Carsey School of Public Policy.

Thank you for considering prevention in Rochester as you put together the NH SOR grant application. If you would like more specific information regarding our projected programs and funding requirements, I am happy to provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Julie Anderson Perron

Coalition Coordinator

BRIDGING the GAPS: Rochester's Substance Misuse Prevention Coalition

Rochester Police Department

23 Wakefield Street, Rochester, NH 03867; 603-330-7160

Julie.Perron@RochesterNH.net

<https://www.facebook.com/BridgingtheGapsNH/>

www.BridgingTheGapsNH.org

Bridging The Gaps Rochester's PREVENTION Coalition

Tel 603-330-7160	23 Wakefield Street	www.BridgingTheGapsNH.org
Fax 603-330-7164	Rochester,	Julie.perron@rochesterNH.net
	NH 03867	

